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Disaster News

DISASTER UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS AVAILABLE TO NH VICTIMS

NEWINGTON, NH – New Hampshire residents who are unemployed as a result of the recent flooding may be eligible for federal Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) benefits, according to federal and state officials. FEMA provides funding to the Department of Labor which directs it to the state of New Hampshire. The state of New Hampshire Employment Security Commission (NHESC) administers the program.

“DUA benefits are being made available to New Hampshire eligible disaster affected residents as a result of the May flooding that took place in six counties,” said Kenneth Clark, coordinating officer for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). “The implementation of this program is designed to specifically assist those who are otherwise ineligible for state unemployment benefits from New Hampshire.”

DUA is designed to provide temporary partial income replacement to people whose employment or self-employment has been lost or interrupted as a direct result of a major disaster and who are not eligible for any other unemployment insurance program.

Richard S. Brothers, Commissioner of NH Employment Security, said, “Individuals, including self-employed individuals who were living or working in the affected areas at the time of the flooding, may be eligible for assistance under either the Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) Program or the Unemployment Compensation Program. We encourage these individuals to file for this assistance as soon as possible.”

The disaster period covered by DUA runs for 26 weeks beginning with the week ending May 20, 2006. DUA initial applications must be filed no later than June 30, 2006. To be eligible for ongoing weekly DUA benefits, a person must continue to be unemployed as a direct result of the flooding disaster that occurred in one of the effected counties of Belknap, Carroll, Hillsborough, Merrimack, Rockingham, and Strafford Counties.

DUA claims are taken over the telephone at 1-800-468-1608, between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

New Hampshire residents and business owners with flood related losses are urged to begin the application process immediately by calling toll-free, **1-800-621-FEMA (3362)** or 1-800-462-7585 (TTY) for the hearing and speech impaired. Trained personnel are available to take applications from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., seven days a week until further notice.

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FEMA manages federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates mitigation activities, works with state and local emergency managers, and manages the National Flood Insurance Program. FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on March 1, 2003.

The N.H. Bureau of Emergency Management is responsible for coordinating the state's emergency response to major natural and man-made disasters. Editors: For more information visit www.fema.gov or www.nhoem.state.nh.us .